

Remarks

Claims 1, 3-6, and 8-10 were previously presented. In the present response, Claims 1, 5, 6, 8, and 9 are amended and Claim 4 is canceled. Accordingly, after entry of the response, Claims 1, 3, 5, 6, and 8-10 will be pending. Reconsideration is respectfully requested based on the following remarks.

Specification

The Examiner indicated that the title of the invention was not descriptive. As indicated above, Applicants have amended the title and therefore requests the objection to the specification be withdrawn.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 1, 3, 4, and 6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e)/103 as being unpatentable over Kashima (U.S. Patent No. 6,104,455), herein referred to as “Kashima,” in view of Sakuramoto et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,369,945), herein referred to as “Sakuramoto”.

Claim 5 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kashima in view of Sakuramoto, further in view of Oda et al. (U.S. Publication No. 2003/0063234), herein referred to as “Oda”.

Claim 8 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kashima in view of Sakuramoto, further in view of Kuroiwa et al. (U.S. Publication No. 2001/0035928), herein referred to as “Kuroiwa”.

Claims 9 and 10 were rejected as being unpatentable over Kashima in view of Sakuramoto, further in view of Ohkawa (U.S. Patent No. 6,339,458) and Kuroiwa.

Of the above-referenced claims, Claims 1, 6, and 9 are independent. Accordingly, once allowability of those claims are established, all claims depending therefrom are likewise allowable.

Claims 1, 6, and 9 are patentable over Kashima and Sakuramoto at least because they recite the following:

... an optical member comprising:
a light diffusion plate diffusing the light generated from the light generating part;
a brightness enhancement sheet ...; and
an ... adhesive layer disposed between the light diffusion plate and the brightness enhancement sheet, the adhesive layer laminating the brightness enhancement sheet with the light diffusion plate.

By laminating a light diffusion plate 224 and a brightness enhancement sheet 226 with an adhesive layer 232 (see Application, FIG. 1), the invention prevents any folding or warping of the brightness enhancement sheet that could adversely affect the luminance level. Since there is no need to compensate for any negative effects caused by the folding or warping of the brightness enhancement sheet, use of a diffusion sheet may be omitted. Taking out the diffusion sheet advantageously decreases the weight and thickness of the LCD apparatus.

Kashima fails to disclose or suggest the optical member having the structure recited in Claims 1, 6, and 9. Kashima shows a light diffusing sheet 16 (e.g., see Kashima's FIG. 8) but it is not laminated with any of the adjacent layers. Moreover, even if it were laminated with another layer, the neighboring layers are light conductor 14 and double-refraction layer 38A, neither of which would qualify as a "brightness enhancement sheet" recited in Claims 1, 6, and 9.

Likewise, Sakuramoto also fails to disclose an optical member having the structure that is recited in Claims 1, 6, and 9. While Sakuramoto shows an optical film 1 attached to an optical part 3 with an adhesive layer 2 (see Sakuramoto, FIG. 3), there is no teaching or suggestion that the optical film 1 and the optical part 3 would correspond to the “light diffusion plate” and the “brightness enhancement sheet” recited in Claims 1, 6, and 9. Hence, there is nothing in Sakuramoto’s disclosure suggesting that wrinkle-avoidance of brightness enhancement sheet by laminating it to a light diffusion layer was contemplated.

Claims 1 and 6 are further distinguishable from Kashima and Sakuramoto for the additional reason that they recite “... lamps arranged parallel to one another.” The parallel lamp arrangement recited in Claims 1 and 6 are typically used in direct-illumination type backlight assembly where lamps are arranged under the optical member. This is distinguishable from the arrangement shown in Kashima. Kashima’s FIG. 8, for example, shows that Kashima’s apparatus employs an edge-illumination type backlight assembly. Hence, Kashima and Sakuramoto, even in combination, fail to teach “lamps arranged parallel to one another.”

For at least these reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that independent Claims 1, 6, and 9 are allowable, and Claims 3, 5, 8, and 10 depending therefrom are likewise allowable.

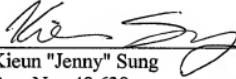
Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103.

Conclusion

In view of the remarks set forth above, it is submitted that the application is now in condition of allowance, notice whereof is respectfully requested by the Examiner. If the Examiner has any questions or concerns, a telephone call to the undersigned at (949) 752-7040 is welcomed and encouraged.

Respectfully submitted,

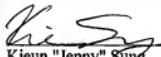
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Date of Signature